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# U.S. FEARS ATTACKS ON NUCLEAR SITES

## Defense Agency Devises Plan to Protect Storage Depots From Terrorist Raids

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WASHINGTON, Oct. 23— The United States has started an intensive new program intended to prevent terrorists from stealing nuclear weapons, according to officials of the Defense Nuclear Agency.

The officials said that for years, security measures had been aimed at protecting nuclear weapons from saboteurs and cranks, rioting mobs, seizure during a political upheaval in a foreign country, or Soviet troops trained to overrun storage sites in Europe.

"But the thing we worry most about today is the threat from a dedicated terrorist force," said Col. C. R. Linton, director of physical security for the agency.

The Pentagon's classified Defense Guidance, the five-year plan that sets policy for the military services, reflected that concern, saying, "The existing program and efforts to improve the security of nuclear weapons sites overseas must be sharply accelerated."

### Seek to Improve Intelligence

The new measures to safeguard nuclear storage sites in the United States, Europe, and South Korea include improving intelligence-gathering on terrorists by military and civilian agencies; devising better sensors to detect intruders, and, particularly, expanding the training of military guards at the sites.

The agency has designed a \$3 million test site, to be completed next year, at Fort McClellan, Ala., where military policemen and other troops trained to guard storage sites can be tested under realistic conditions, including live demolitions. The site, which will also be used to test new sensors, alarms, fences, lights, and other devices, will have moveable towers and fences so that guards can be tested under conditions resembling those of actual storage areas.

On the rising threat, Colonel Linton and other officers said they had been informed that terrorists in Europe might have been planning to break into an undisclosed number of sites where nuclear artillery shells and other tactical weapons were stored.

### Sought Information From Dozier

While they would not go into detail, the officers said that the Red Brigades terrorists who kidnapped Brig. Gen. James L. Dozier in Italy last December had been seeking information on United States nuclear storage sites in Europe.

"Fortunately," said Colonel Linton, "he didn't know anything."

The officers at the Defense Nuclear Agency, which assists and advises United States forces armed with nuclear weapons, said the primary danger to a nuclear storage site would come from an armed, trained, and motivated band of 10 to 12 terrorists. Units larger than that, they said, would be easier for intelligence agencies or for sensors and guards to detect. They pointed out that some nuclear weapons could be lifted and carried by a single man while others would require transport by truck.

Colonel Linton and other officers also said they had seen evidence in Europe that terrorist groups and members of organizations opposed to nuclear weapons had begun to join forces with the theft of a nuclear weapon in mind. They said they could comment no further on this.

### Theft Would be Embarrassing

However, besides the threat implied by the theft of a nuclear weapon, they said such a theft could cause a wide range of political embarrassments to the United States or, if it happened abroad, to a foreign government.

They said that would be true even if the terrorists did not know how to detonate the weapon. Besides being complicated mechanisms, American-built nuclear weapons have a series of built-in devices to prevent accidental explosions and to foil thieves.

The new program to safeguard nuclear depots has taken high priority in the various military intelligence services, the Central Intelligence Agency, the Federal Bureau of Investigation, and other agencies, the officers said.

The cost of the overall program is difficult to determine, the officers said, because the funds are scattered through various Army, Navy, and Air Force operating budgets, plus those of the intelligence and law enforcement agencies.

### Agency Spending \$10 Million

As an indication, however, Colonel Linton said the Defense Nuclear Agency had 56 research projects on protective devices underway this year that would cost about \$10 million, compared with eight projects costing \$1 million in 1977.

Among the projects is the development of a device that guards could use at night so that no lights would be necessary, thus helping to conceal the presence of a storage site or make it difficult for terrorists to collect information. The device would be more sophisticated than current night-sight telescopes used by the military.

The officers also said that among the new protective measures was construction of "hardened" barracks in which quick-reaction forces could be stationed and withstand assaults by machine guns. But they pointed out that there were no stock answers to protecting a storage site and that each must have a plan taking into account the location and size of the site and the terrain and foliage around it.